Malaysia Dutch East

MOHAMMED

OR

CHRIST

Which Shall It Be

?

35,000,000
Mohammedans in Malaysia
Now is the time
to reach them

Board of Foreign Missions
Methodist Episcopal Church
150 Fifth Avenue, New York

Map of Malaysia Superimposed over Map of United States

MOHAMMED OR CHRIST?

Just now, when the great events of the world's war are resulting in the disintegration of Islam, and when the Mohammedans are open to the influences of Christian civilization and to the preaching of the gospel as never before, a remarkable opening for commencing work among them has come to the Methodist Episcopal Church through the offer of an anonymous friend at Singapore. This gentleman, long a resident in Malaysia, has for a number of years been much interested in the welfare of the Malays and has done a great deal for them. He noticed that because of inadequate forces and finances the tendency of the missionaries and organizations in Malaysia has usually been to neglect the more difficult and apparently unfruitful work among Mohammedans, in favor of those races and religions where more rapid results may be anticipated. He earnestly desired that some mission would take up work among them, but it seemed to him quite possible that even if work were actually begun it might be abandoned after a time on account of the

difficulty of sustaining interest at the home base in work which, in the nature of the case, cannot be expected to report numerous conversions. For years he hoped that in some way there might be provided the nucleus of a fund which would secure the continuity of such a work, and that with such a nucleus others interested in the salvation of the Mohammedans would be encouraged to contribute to this special cause, and also that some mission board would support it as far as possible.

Ten years ago this gentleman received an unexpected legacy. The rubber industry about that time began to give promise of unusual returns, and he decided to invest the money in planting rubber. With that object in view he acquired from the Government some land near the sea, with frontage on a navigable river; his purpose being to make a portion of the land available for Malays to settle on so as to earn a living by fishing and agriculture, while the remainder of the land could be used for planting rubber, the produce of which would yield a good income. Planting was begun in 1907, and an Indian Christian, under the supervision of a neighboring European planter, has managed the estate quite successfully from the first. Before the whole of the rubber

came into bearing, it became necessary to borrow some thousands of dollars on the security of the estate, and the payment of this debt has somewhat deferred the commencement of the work among the Malays. The debt has now, however, been entirely wiped out, and the estate, being free from

A Malay Feast

all encumbrances, is in a position to provide the nucleus of the long hoped for fund.

The owner of the estate, who desires that his identity should be not generally made known, has entered into an agreement with the finance committee of the Malaysia Conference, by which in the event of his death the estate will become the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with certain

provisions for legacies to his family. While he lives he proposes to manage the estate himself, but the work supported will be under the control of the Malaysia Conference and the bishop in charge. At a conservative estimate the estate is now worth fully $50,000 and last year yielded a fair profit. It is hoped that the estate will be able, within a few years, to provide several thousands of dollars for this work among the Malays.

The work to be done, as at present contemplated, will consist, in the first place, of schools distinctively for Malay people, medical work in connection with regular itineration in the Malay villages, followed as soon as possible by the establishment of a hospital, and the preparation and distribution of Malay Christian literature.

Bishop J. E. Robinson has seized the opportunity by appointing the Rev. W. G. Shellabear, D.D., and his wife to work distinctively among the Mohammedan Malays, with their headquarters at Singapore. Dr. Shellabear has lived in Malaysia for over thirty years, and his wife twenty-five years. They both speak the Malay language fluently and are well prepared to engage at once in this difficult task. For fifteen years Dr. Shellabear was engaged by the Bible So-

ciety on the revision of the entire Malay Bible. He is the author of the most popular grammar of the Malay language and of the only complete English-Malay dictionary. He has translated Pilgrim's Progress and a number of other books into Malay, has edited several of the Malay clas-

Bible Colporteur on Tour in Malaysia

sics, and has written practically all of the Christian literature in the Malay language which is now available for the use of the missionaries. He has traveled extensively in the Malay Peninsula and in North Borneo, and his travels and writings have made his name a household word among all educated Malays.

The following is an outline of the program as at present proposed:

(1) Two small Malay schools for girls had already been commenced in 1914 by

Mrs. W. G. Shellabear

Mrs. Shellabear. These have been supported largely by the gifts of friends in Singapore, and are being continued under the supervision of a missionary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. They are

exercising an important influence in that section of the city of Singapore where they are located, and several other schools of this kind should be established as soon as teach-

Rev. W. G. Shellabear, D.D.

ers are available and can be properly supervised.

(2) In connection with the Singapore Anglo-Chinese School, it is proposed that Dr. Shellabear will establish a hostel for

Malay boys, in order that parents who reside in the neighboring Malay States and who desire their sons to have an English education may be encouraged to send them to Singapore for that purpose. The Malays do not mix freely with the Chinese, and therefore none but Mohammedan or Christian Malay boys would be received in this hostel.

(3) For medical work there is an immense field open and a crying need, which is only partially met in some regions by the Government hospitals and dispensaries. The Government doctors themselves realize that the Malays are very much afraid of the hospitals, and that it is exceedingly difficult to induce them even to come to the Government dispensaries for treatment, and especially that it is almost impossible to do anything to help their women in their time of need.

It is proposed, first, to employ a locally trained midwife to visit from village to village with a missionary, and then, as soon as possible, a doctor would be provided to take advantage of the interest thus created. The work of such a doctor would be principally itinerating from village to village. As the Malays are a sea-faring people, and the majority of them live on the sea-coast or

on navigable rivers, a motor boat will be required for this work, with comfortable accommodations on board for the workers as well as for the crew. The rubber estate mentioned above would be an excellent

A Malay Family

center from which such work could be carried on. As soon as funds are available similar centers could be opened elsewhere, and hospitals built as required.

(4) A very essential department of all work among Mohammedans is a literature campaign. Very little Christian literature

in the Malay language suitable for distribution among the Mohammedans has yet been produced, and this will be a very important part of Dr. Shellabear's work. Not only will the cost of printing and publication have to be met, but it will also be necessary to employ colporteurs to go from village to village and house to house to distribute the literature. It is also hoped that it will be possible to get articles written and published in the local Malay newspapers.

Dr. and Mrs. Shellabear will be responsible for carrying out so far as possible the program outlined here, and the success of this important and difficult enterprise will depend very largely on the extent to which they are able to obtain new workers and financial help from the church in America.

Singapore, with its great population and surrounded by more than thirty-five millions of Mohammedans, is the strategic center for Mohammedanism in all Malaysia. The Malays of the Malay Peninsula, though they do not number more than two or three million, are the most influential of the many branches of the Malay race. The Malay language, as spoken on the Malay Peninsula, is the literary language of Islam for

A Malay Village

the entire archipelago, and the tribes speaking other languages are said to "become Malays" when they are converted to Mohammedanism. The Malays themselves are scattered along the coast line of the great islands of Borneo and Sumatra, and of all the neighboring islands, even of Java. There is a constant communication between Singapore and all parts of the field, by means of steamships and a multitude of native sailing boats. Thus Singapore is the strategic center, and the Malay of the Peninsula is the key man in the great conflict which is on in Malaysia between Christianity and Mohammedanism. The issue of the battle in Singapore will decide in great measure which of these two powerful religious forces will have the greater influence on the coming generation. Therefore a wise and farseeing leadership will provide Christian forces at Singapore adequately equipped for the conflict with the most powerful enemy that servants of Christ have to face. The support of Dr. Shellabear and family is provided by the Board of Foreign Missions, but other funds will be needed even to begin the work as planned.

The following are some of the urgent, immediate needs:

Mission Staff

New Missionary and wife	
Transit Expenses	$700.00
Salary	1,200.00
House Rent	240.00
Medical Missionary and wife	
Transit Expenses	700.00
Salary	1,200.00
House Rent	240.00
Native Preacher	
Salary	175.00
House Rent	75.00
Native Colporteur	
Salary	175.00
House Rent	75.00
Native Medical Assistant	
Salary	360.00
Total	$5,140.00

Equipment

One Ford Car for village itineration, with freight to Singapore	$800.00
One motor boat for medical itineration, needed in 1918	2,000.00
Total	$2,800.00

The above indicates the amount which should be provided if the Mission to the Malays is to measure up even approximately

to the greatness of the opportunity. Later on funds will be needed for further equipment, such as the purchase of land, houses for the missionaries, a hostel at Singapore, and one or more hospitals.

With the above provided it is expected that the profits from the rubber plantation will take care of the many incidentals and current expenses which will come as the result of the work done and success achieved.

Correspondence and pledges should be addressed to James M. Taylor, Secretary Department of Foreign Evangelism, Board of Foreign Missions, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

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